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ABSTRACT

The underrepresentation in gifted programs of students who are members of minority or other groups warrants increased attention from educators. With the continuing quest for both equity and excellence in public education, there is a renewed interest in ensuring the participation of minority students in gifted programs and in bridging the gap between research and practice. This publication is designed as a resource to assist school administrators and directors of gifted and talented programs in their efforts to increase the participation of minority students. It includes the following: (1) statistics reflecting underrepresentation of minority students; (2) definitions of giftedness; (3) identification issues and recommendations; (4) descriptions of suggested practices and alternative procedures; (5) recommendations for increasing the participation of minority students; (6) a 38-item bibliography; (7) a 32-item matrix of selected readings; (8) a list of professional training programs in gifted education; and (9) five charts that illustrate the text. (MYM)

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Increasing Minority Participation In Gifted Programs

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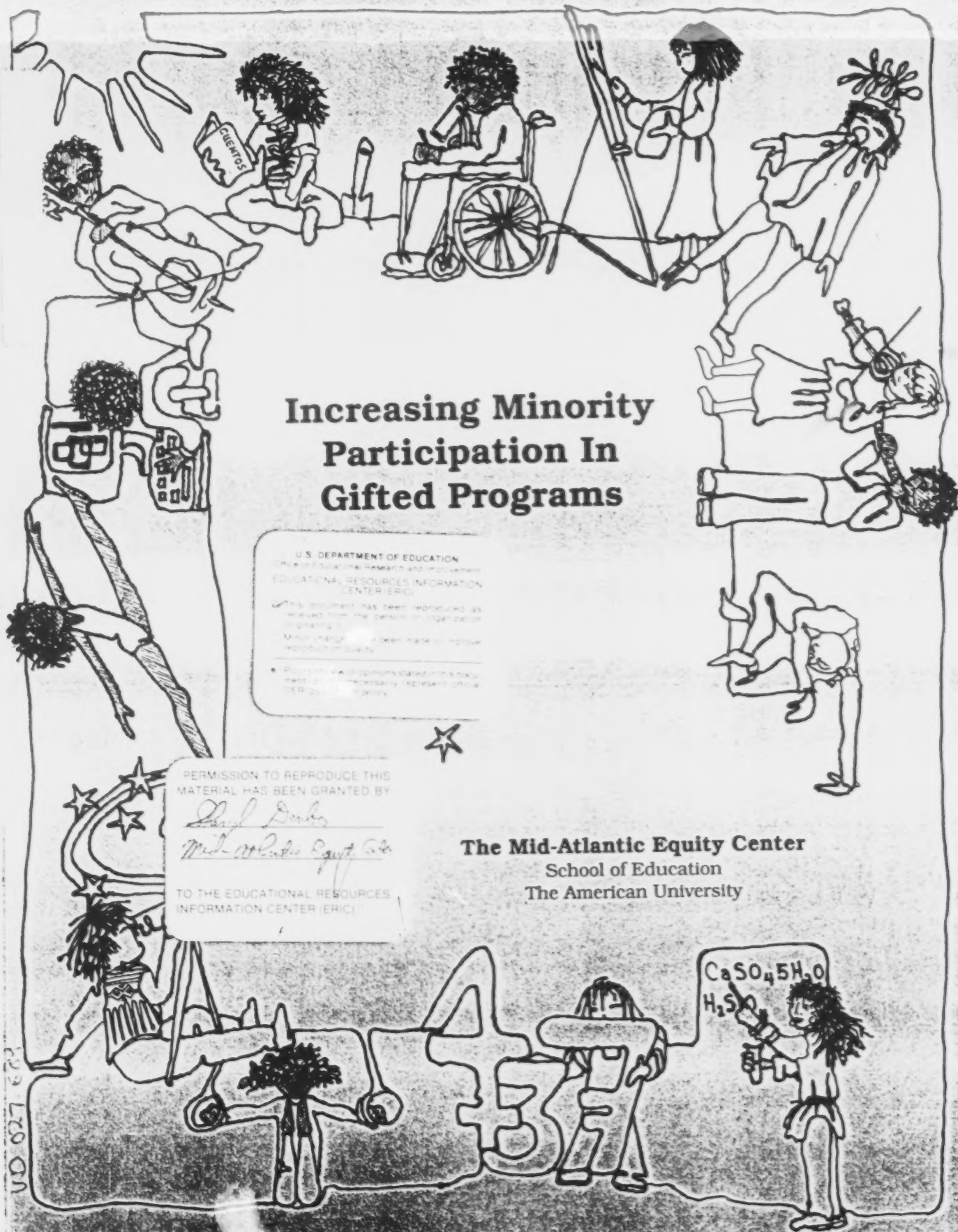


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Increasing Minority Participation in Gifted Programs

Developed by
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I. Introduction

With the continuing quest for both equity and excellence in public education, there is a renewed interest in ensuring the participation of minority students in gifted programs and in bridging the gap between research and practice. Concern continues to focus on the underrepresentation of minority and culturally diverse students in programs for the gifted. According to the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, minority groups such as Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans are underrepresented by 30-70 percent in gifted programs and overrepresented by 40-50 percent in special education programs (Richert, 1987). Particular groups of gifted students, especially minorities, are disadvantaged by the typical identification procedures (Richert, 1987). Richert asserts that educational equity is being violated in the identification of specific populations. Gifted and talented programs need to eliminate barriers created by cultural differences and low economic status by providing accessible routes to expanding horizons for all students.

Minority student participation in gifted programs has been limited by the lack of agreement about the definition of giftedness, by the use of inappropriate or biased assessment instruments, and by restricted or misused identification procedures. Inadequate identification methods that fail to identify minority or culturally diverse students for gifted programs not only deny them educational equity as individuals, but result in a national deficit of untapped resources (Renzulli, 1978; Bernal, 1980).

This publication is designed as a resource to assist school administrators and directors of gifted and talented programs in their efforts to increase the participation of minority students in gifted and talented programs. It explores issues related to the current underrepresentation of minority students, including:

- Statistics reflecting underrepresentation of minority students;
- Definitions of giftedness;
- Identification issues and recommendations;
- Descriptions of promising practices/alternative procedures;
- Recommendations for increasing participation of minority students;
- Appendices: (A) Bibliography, (B) Matrix of Selected Readings, and (C) Professional Training Programs in Gifted Education.

II.

Underrepresentation of Gifted Minority Children

The patterns of underrepresentation of minority children in gifted programs have been cited by scholars and researchers during the last fifty years. As early as 1934, studies have documented that Black children with high intelligence scores from varying backgrounds have reached achievement levels comparable to other gifted students, clearly establishing the irrelevance of race to the development of intellect (Witty and Jenkins, 1934; Jenkins, 1948). Yet, gifted minority and culturally diverse children with the exception of Asian American children, simply have not been identified in proportion to their representation in the public schools (Bernal, 1976; Cummings, 1980). According to Renzulli (1976), our nation's largest untapped source of human intelligence and creativity is to be found among the vast numbers of individuals in the lower socioeconomic level, particularly among Black and Hispanic Americans. A number of educators (Bloom, 1965; Kozol, 1967; Torrance, 1968, 1984; Marland, 1972; Passow, 1986) have called attention to the dimensions of this untapped source of talent and the need for a sustained effort to eliminate the causes and problems.

The 1986 Elementary and Secondary Civil Rights Survey of 15,777 school districts, representing 82,999 schools, reported national summaries of the percentages of pupils by ethnic group who were participating in gifted and talented programs and compared those percentages with their total school enrollments. Though 30% of students enrolled in public schools in 1986 were ethnic minorities, only 18% were identified as gifted. By comparison, white students comprised 70% of the total school population and 81% of gifted students. Chart I (Office of Civil Rights Elementary and Secondary School Survey, 1986) lists the student subpopulations, the percentage of each subpopulation enrolled in public schools and the percentage participating in gifted programs. This survey supports earlier research and documents the severe underrepresentation of Black, Hispanic and Native American Indian students in gifted and talented programs.

Chart I.

**Percentages of
Students Enrolled
in Public Schools
and Participating in
Gifted and Talented
Programs by Sub-
population*

<i>Student Subpopulation</i>	<i>Percentage Enrolled in Public Schools</i>	<i>Percentage Participating in Gifted & Talented Programs</i>
American Indian	1.0%	0.0%
Asian	3.0%	5.0%
Hispanic	10.0%	5.0%
Black	16.0%	8.0%
TOTALS	30.0%	18.0%
White	70.0%	81.0%

**Percentages were
rounded off.*

Source: United States Office of Civil Rights, 1986.

III.

Definitions of Giftedness

Many experts believe that the lack of clarity and precision in the definition of giftedness is a factor contributing to minority underrepresentation. Embedded in the various definitions are several different philosophies and attitudes toward the gifted and strategies for meeting their needs.

In 1978, the U.S. Congress passed a bill which included an updated definition of gifted and talented students. Public Law 95-561 of the Education Amendments of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reads:

... the term gifted and talented children means children and, whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance or capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability, or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require service or activities not ordinarily provided by the school (Tuttle and Becker, 1980).

With this revised definition the student can possess demonstrated or potential ability in one or more of five areas: intellectual prowess, specific academic ability, creativity, visual and/or performing arts and leadership ability. In the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988, part of Public Law 100-297, (1988), the U.S. Congress reaffirmed this multifaceted definition of gifted and talented students. The Javits Act also gave highest priority to cooperative programs and to:

the identification of gifted and talented students who may not be identified through traditional assessment methods (including economically disadvantaged individuals, individuals of limited English proficiency, and individuals with handicaps) and to education programs designed to include gifted and talented students from such groups (U.S. Congress, 1988).

Renzulli (1978) presented an operational definition of "giftedness" based on research findings, a definition that many school personnel have found useful. Renzulli states:

Giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits — these clusters being above-average general abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity. Gifted and talented children

Chart II.
Two Definitions
of Gifted

Public Law 100-297 (1988):

General
intellectual
ability

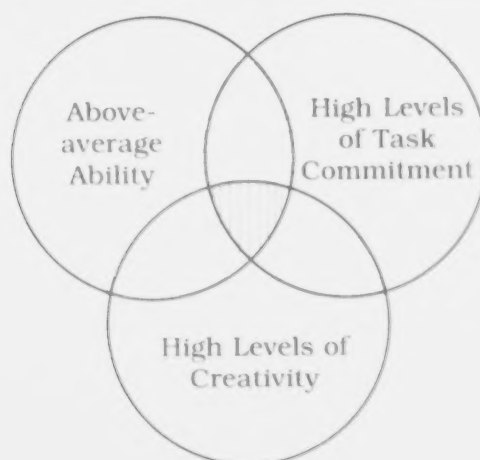
Specific
academic
aptitude &
achievement

Creativity

Visual &
performing
arts

Leadership
psychosocial
abilities

Renzulli (1978): Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness



are those possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable areas of human performance. Children who manifest or are capable of developing an interaction among the three clusters require a wide variety of educational opportunities and services that are not ordinarily provided through regular instructional programs (Renzulli, 1978).

Chart II compares these definitions of giftedness. A key concept underlying Renzulli's definition is that each of the three clusters is an equal partner in contributing to giftedness. Renzulli has further stated that one of the major errors that continues to be made in identification procedures is an overemphasis on superior intellectual abilities at the expense of the other two clusters of traits.

An expanding body of literature regarding giftedness has recognized that children from depressed areas, racial minorities and low income groups have not been included in traditional gifted programs. Within each of these groups, the probability of a gifted girl realizing her full potential is discernibly less than that of a gifted boy, despite the fact that

the proportion of the identified gifted in school systems is equally divided between boys and girls. Gifted girls frequently choose to give up or hide their special abilities because of societal pressures and barriers such as: inherent conflicts in expectations for gifted females, inequitable school practices, lack of support for achieving females, and limited career opportunities. As a result of these factors, gifted girls as well as racial minorities experience insufficient motivation, inadequate self-concept and fear of success (Shaffer, 1986). A key question which remains unanswered is whether the wider definition of gifted, as reflected in federal law, more accurately reflects the divergence in values and behavior of the culturally diverse student or whether that definition camouflages the severity of the current underrepresentation of minority youth identified as intellectually gifted.

Minority students may be proportionally represented in areas such as the visual and performing arts or leadership, and underrepresented in some of the intellectually gifted areas because of inappropriate assessment instruments in the intellectual/academic areas. The representation of minority students in various programs should be carefully monitored by keeping statistics on the number of students identified in each category.

Bell and Roach (1987) make the point that old stereotypes must be replaced by a definition of giftedness that will include *all* gifted students, the non-achieving as well as those who are achieving. The impact of environmental factors or experience upon innate potential indicates strongly that schools should not only identify the "gifted", but should also identify students of all backgrounds and experiences who have the potential to become gifted (Richert, 1987). Specific programs should be designed to develop that potential. Bernal (1976) maintains that "to be culturally different means to be behaviorally different in group identifiable ways." If we accept this premise, then it is essential to use the widest possible variety of alternative identification instruments and procedures compatible with a broad definition, for it is likely that behavioral manifestations of giftedness vary among cultures.

IV. Issues in Identifying Minority and Culturally Diverse Children

Early definitions of giftedness based solely on traditional measures of intelligence, such as Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.), virtually ignored the existence of a much broader spectrum of highly valuable human characteristics and abilities. A major barrier to the identification of minority students was the use of a single instrument that was culturally biased and depended upon traditional measures of performance. This discriminated against youngsters who had not participated fully in the dominant culture. For identification purposes, students who are at a disadvantage may be racial or cultural minorities, females, rural or urban students, or students with disabilities. They may also be underidentified due to the nature of their giftedness - creativity, the arts, leadership, psychomotor ability; by academic underachievement; or physical, learning or emotional disabilities (Richert, 1987).

Marland (1972) indicated that traditional measures of school achievement, such as intelligence and achievement tests, grades and recommendations of teachers not trained in gifted education, will screen out at least half of the qualified and talented students. Criticisms of intelligence tests used in identification procedures have been well documented (Miller, 1974; Samuda, 1975). Alvino, MacDonnel and Richert (1981) reported the results of a national survey indicating that "many tests/instruments are being used for purposes and populations completely antithetical to those [for] which they are intended and were designed."

The National Report on Identification: Assessment and Recommendations for Comprehensive Identification of Gifted and Talented Youth (1982) lists some essential issues of identification, cited by a panel of consultants, including the following:

1. A need to come to an agreement on the definition of giftedness;
2. A need to establish underlying principles of identification that address equity concerns;
3. A need to clarify the educational purposes of identification in order to find unrealized as well as demonstrated potential in students;
4. A need to eliminate inadequate identification practices; and
5. A need to use formal procedures, such as standardized tests and grades, as well as informal procedures, such as checklists, inventories and nominations.

Based on the identification issues, the report made the following recommendations:

1. That the assessment should be multifactored. No single instrument is a sufficient basis upon which to assess the multifaceted nature of giftedness;
2. That informal procedures, such as the use of scales, checklists and nominations be considered a legitimate part of a total identification process to complement school-based achievement;
3. That practitioners avoid combining or summing up scores when using multiple measures;
4. That there should be a clear distinction between two stages of identification: (a) nominations for a large talent pool; and (b) a more refined assessment of student needs and abilities for actual selection to gifted programs.

In accordance with the above recommendations, Chart III, which begins on the next page, presents a "Checklist for Evaluation of Identification Procedures" (Richert et al., 1982), designed to improve the decisionmaking process used to identify gifted students. The recommendations can guide the establishment of a comprehensive and unbiased procedure for locating potentially gifted students and for expanding the pool of "talented" students. In addition, it provides direction for assessing the development, learning styles and interests of these students in an effort to provide them with appropriate program options to meet their needs.

Chart III. Checklist for Evaluation of Identification Procedures*

Stage I Nomination

General Goal: To establish comprehensive and unbiased procedures to find as many potentially gifted students as possible in all areas of human endeavor for placement in a Talent Pool.

Objectives:

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program

Yes No

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1. To use the broadest possible definition of potentially gifted as a foundation for programming so the needs of exceptional youth and our society's need for their talents are met.</p> | <p>1. a. Students are nominated for <i>each</i> of the categories in the (modified) federal definition, including about 20-30% of the school population at all grade levels.</p> | ☐ ☐ |
| <p>2. To have a procedure that is not biased against the gifted among disadvantaged subpopulations, so that they are not excluded from services and so that society is not denied their exceptional contributions.</p> | <p>2. The Talent Pool is approximately representative of the entire student population in terms of socioeconomic status, racial, gender, cultural, language or disability groups.</p> | ☐ ☐ |
| <p>3. a. To actively seek the talented among various disadvantaged groups;</p> | <p>3. a. Parents, students, and community members are made aware of characteristics of the gifted and the nature of program options so that they can nominate candidates for the Pool.</p> | ☐ ☐ |
| <p>b. To find those students whose exceptional abilities are not revealed by school performance on standardized tests;</p> | <p>b. Teachers are trained in one or more of the practices to identify disadvantaged students.</p> | ☐ ☐ |
| <p>c. To include in the Pool students who are underachieving or gifted in areas other than academic achievement (creative, visual/performing arts, psychosocial, psychomotor). If there are errors in nomination, they should be in the direction of including some students who may not achieve exceptionally rather than of risking the exclusion of anyone who may need special services to achieve exceptional potential.</p> | <p>c. Several unbiased procedures that will find abilities not revealed by measures of academic achievement – such as checklists, self-nominations and product evaluations – are used to complement test data.</p> | ☐ ☐ |
| | <p>d. No student has been excluded from the Pool solely on the basis of an achievement measure such as class grades or a standardized test. Test scores are used only to include students in, not to exclude students from, the Talent Pool.</p> | ☐ ☐ |

* Adapted from E. Susanne Richert, James J. Alvino and Rebecca C. McDonnell, *National Report on Identification: Assessment and Recommendations for Comprehensive Identification of Gifted and Talented Youth*, 1982. Reprinted with permission.

Objectives:

4. To focus on those data that have relatively good predictive value: independence, persistence, perseverance and productivity in interest areas.
5. To avoid invalid combinations of data for each of the categories of giftedness, so that certain subpopulations or categories are not erroneously excluded.
6. Resource limitations should not distort the identification process at this stage (though they may affect Stage II).
7. To improve the accuracy of teacher nominations and to prevent the burden of inappropriate expectations of students after nomination.
8. To offer all students the opportunity to demonstrate abilities that are indicative of talent; to make all students eligible to receive some services. (Also see Stage II, 7, below).
9. Early identification should be used to *prevent* problems of underachievement in either school performance or creativity.
10. To avoid the three most common errors in test usage.
 - a. Test is used to assess abilities which it cannot assess, thereby invalidly excluding students.
 - b. Test is used for category to which it is unrelated, therefore excluding some talented students.
 - c. Test is used on populations for which it was not normed, creating a bias that excludes many subpopulations.
 - d. Test is used for the *wrong* stage of identification.

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program**Yes No**

4. Information about initiative, activities and achievements of students beyond school are actively sought. ☐ ☐
5. Appropriate combinations of data for *each* category of talent and subpopulation are specified. The top 5% nominated by *each* appropriate procedure is included in the Talent Pool. ☐ ☐
6. There is no arbitrary cut-off point, even if not all students can be served in options outside the regular class. ☐ ☐
7. Teachers and other staff involved in the process have received training in the characteristics and needs of the potentially gifted. ☐ ☐
8. Each regular classroom teacher is trained to provide some differentiated curriculum that develops the talents of students so their exceptional abilities become manifest. ☐ ☐
9. Pre-school, kindergarten and first-grade teachers are trained to recognize potential and to offer a curriculum that will evoke exceptional abilities. ☐ ☐
10. Tests are used appropriately:
 - a. only to assess those abilities for which they were designed; ☐ ☐
 - b. only for the proper category of giftedness which relates to that ability; ☐ ☐
 - c. only for those socioeconomic populations on which they were normed; and ☐ ☐
 - d. only for the specific appropriate stage. ☐ ☐

Stage II Assessment

General Goal: To gather data to assess the development, learning styles and interests of students, so that their needs can be matched with appropriate program options.

Objectives:

1. To provide a sound rationale for programming based on *need* and to avoid:
 - a. damaging average students by the unprovable assertion that some students are "not gifted";
 - b. elitist attitudes among the gifted;
 - c. exacerbating the isolation of the gifted; and
 - d. the projection of unfair expectations and pressures on the talented.
2. To focus on assessing student needs.
3. To avoid labeling or rank-ordering the potentially gifted without a basis in research, since, beyond the threshold of ability that gets students into the Pool, we cannot presently predict who will make original contributions as adults.
4. To have the curriculum incorporate:
 - a. the interest-based motivation of the gifted; and
 - b. students taking responsibility for planning their work.
5. To develop a short-range program which meets student *needs* and allocates available *resources* equitably.

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program

Yes No

1. Students are *not* labeled more gifted or less gifted, but are identified as students who *need* special programming to fulfill their exceptional potential. ☐ ☐
2. Information on students' interests, learning styles, problems and actual achievement are sought in a variety of ways. ☐ ☐
3. Data gathered are used to match *needs* and interests with program *options*, not to further classify degrees of "giftedness." ☐ ☐
4. Students have a major role in the selection of appropriate program options. ☐ ☐
5. If resources limit students' access to available program options, rank order should be based on *need*, with these criteria having the greatest weight:
 - a. exceptionality of motivation or interest;
 - b. exceptionality of ability;
 - c. underachievement or other affective problems in the regular classroom; and
 - d. disadvantaged in educational experiences.

Objectives:

6. To provide a long-range program which offers multiple options to develop the potential of all the students in the Pool.
7. To assure that *all* students have the opportunity to demonstrate exceptional talent, so that our society does not lose its most valuable resource.

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program**Yes No**

6. There are plans to generate or reallocate resources so multiple program options are designed to meet the needs of *all* the students in the Pool.
7. All students nominated have access to some differentiated curriculum at least in the regular classroom.

**Stage III
Evaluation**

General Goal: To gather and evaluate data in order to improve decision-making in Nomination and Assessment without violating curriculum goals.

Objectives:

1. To assure that data collected on student progress is appropriate to problem objectives.
- a. Student progress assessment should not be used to make judgments but to foster self-understanding and cooperation.
- b. Students must be valued more than their products or performance. Students should not be pitted against each other or be psychologically threatened by others' achievements.
- c. Acquiring the skills and responsibility for self-evaluation is a vital curriculum objective. Evaluation should foster the development of independent self-esteem and self-acceptance rather than dependence on external approval.
- d. Evaluation criteria should be appropriate to curriculum for the gifted.
- e. Professionals with knowledge of standards in various fields should be involved in product or performance evaluation.

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program**Yes No**

- 1.
- a. Focus is on individual student progress, rather than competition among students.
- b. Evaluation focuses on products and performance, not the student. If comparisons are made, they are among the products and performance, not among students.
- c. Students are involved in self-evaluation: setting goals and assessing the degree to which they are met; developing criteria for assessment.
- d. Criteria of creativity and productivity, rather than achievement in skills or conformity of thinking, are stressed.
- e. Resources beyond the school are sought for product or performance evaluation.

Objectives:

2. To improve Assessment, match of student needs and program options.

- a. Evaluation of results should be used to improve student achievement, not to label students as non-productive or "non-gifted."
- b. The interest-based motivation of students should be used for decisions about program options.
- c. The identification procedure should be evaluated to determine if it has been effective in matching potentially gifted students with appropriate program options.
- d. Evaluation data should be used for program improvement. Unsatisfactory progress should be seen as reflective of program, not student, deficits.

3. To improve Nomination.

- a. The nomination procedures are evaluated to determine whether they have been effective in selecting gifted students.
- b. Nomination is modified to include a representative proportion of disadvantaged groups.

Evidence of Excellence and Equity in a Comprehensive Identification Program

Yes No

2.

- a. Evaluation results are used to improve the match between the program and student needs and interests, not to exclude students from services.
- b. As a result of their own assessments, students have a major role in selecting those program options in which to participate.
- c. Where there is unsatisfactory student progress, modifications are made to improve the match between program options and student needs and interests, either to modify option or placement.
- d. Evaluation results are used to modify or generate program actions that better meet student needs.

3.

- a. Follow-up data is compiled on creativity, productivity and contributions of students until after their formal education is completed.
- b. More promising practices to identify disadvantaged are included.

V.

Promising Practices for Identifying Gifted Minority and Culturally Diverse Students

Mitchell (1988) advocates combining the use of intelligence tests and behavioral scales with individualized selection procedures that provide special consideration for poor, minority and disabled students. There are several other practices designed to minimize bias against those who are not part of the dominant culture. These strategies include the use of: (A) inventories, checklists, observation scales, and self-nominations; (B) existing data or information, such as biographical data interviews or case studies; (C) performance and/or product evaluation(s); (D) norms for local populations; and (E) further testing such as culture-fair, language-specific tests for intelligence and creativity. A combination of these strategies is the most effective approach to providing equitable opportunities for all students.

Both formal and informal measures should be utilized to minimize bias. Instruments and procedures should be used only at the appropriate identification stages and for their specific categories of giftedness. Multiple measures should be looked at individually, not added together, because each measures different aspects of giftedness. Educators should be trained to recognize multiple characteristics among their diverse students and a "Developmental Curriculum" should be used to evoke the extraordinary potential of gifted students who are underachieving or members of groups which are disadvantaged by the identification procedures (Richert, 1985).

New approaches, such as the Revolving Door Identification Model (RDIM), offer potential for overcoming the traditional definition of gifted education. RDIM is designed to provide various types and levels of enrichment to a broader spectrum of the school's population than is now generally given; improve the extent and quality of enrichment for all students through the "radiation of excellence" schoolwide; and integrate the special program in the regular classroom (Renzulli & Starks, 1984).

A. Inventories, checklists, scales and nomination forms

There are innumerable "locally developed" inventories, checklists, scales and nomination forms that are used for nomination or other stages in the identification process. By recognizing unusual characteristics, such as critical thinking, creativity, or motivation, they complement

information obtained through achievement or test assessment. Although use of these forms by teachers, parents, students or community representatives is one of the most popular non-test approaches, caution should be exercised to ensure that the assessed behavior is indicative of giftedness.

Appendix B (Matrix of Selected Readings) indicates sources for samples of these forms.

B. Information from students

Student information may include self-nomination, interviews, biographical data or case studies. In a comparison of traditional approaches and the case study approach, Renzulli and Smith (1977), found the case study method to be generally superior in identifying gifted students, especially among minority students. Such an approach also provides an opportunity to collect and assess information about non-academic and out of school performance.

Particularly useful at the high school level, self-nomination can identify self initiating, task-committed students who would be unlikely to be identified in teacher-centered or structured classrooms (Richert, 1987).

C. Performance and/or product evaluation

In some categories of giftedness for which there are no standardized tests or where the validity of the instrument is questionable, demonstrated performance or product evaluation is both realistic and practical. In sports, the criteria for excellence include skill, originality or risk-taking. In the visual arts, portfolios provide evidence of accomplishments. In music, dance and drama, the audition, a real performance, may be required. In each case, the criteria of excellence and originality are specific to the particular field.

D. Norms for local populations

Some school districts establish local norms for existing standardized achievement measures. If the local population differs substantially from the general population on which the test was normed, there may be a bias against certain groups overrepresented in the local population. This may occur when there are greater proportions of disadvantaged youth in a school district than in the nation as a whole (Richert, 1987). Standards and procedures for establishing local norms have been developed for ESEA Title I (now Chapter I) by RMC Research Corporation (Wood and Tallmadge, 1976). According to Richert, et al. (1982), some tests such as the Stanford Binet and Guilford's Structure of Intelligence (SOI) have norms for certain subpopulations.

E. Further Testing

In addition to traditional standardized achievement measures there are tests designed to measure intellectual and creative abilities in students from linguistically and culturally different backgrounds. These tests include culture-fair tests, language-specific tests, intelligence tests (with norms for some subpopulations) and creativity tests.

Culture-fair Tests: Culture-fair tests may have one or more of the following characteristics:

- a series of factored intelligence scales to measure basic intelligence;
- abstract figures and designs for students to solve problems;
- a pictorial format to provide a profile of specific cognitive areas;
- slides of student's own environment to determine ability to recall one's community in an organized manner;
- environmental and school data to provide a composite picture of student's total functioning.

Some examples of tests that are considered to be culture-fair are:

- Cattell Culture-Fair Intelligence Series;
- Progressive Matrices, *Standard and Advanced (Ravens)*;
- Cartoon Conservation Scales;
- Stallings Environmentally Based Screen;
- System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment (SOMPA).

Language Specific Tests: Some examples of language-specific tests that have been developed for use with other than English-speaking populations are:

- Cartoon Conservation Scales (may be administered in the language most comfortable for the child);
- CIRCUS (EL CIRCO, 1980, Spanish);
- Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (Spanish);
- Group Inventory for Finding Creative Talent (Spanish, French, German, Hebrew);
- System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment, SOMPA (Spanish);
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Escala de Inteligencia Wechsler para Niños, Spanish).

Intelligence Tests: At the nomination stage, there are several individual intelligence tests that can help locate intellectually gifted who may not be identified in traditional ways and who may not perform well on group tests. These tests include the Cartoon Conservation Scales, Columbia Mental Maturity Scales, and the Kaufman ABC Test.

Creativity Tests: For identifying the creatively gifted who may be culturally disadvantaged, two tests were generally recommended by experts (Richert et al., 1982). The two tests were the figural portion of Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking and the divergent thinking section of the SOI (Structure of Intellect) Learning Abilities Test.

Chart IV provides a matrix for utilizing promising practices to identify gifted or talented students who may otherwise be at a disadvantage for identification.

Chart IV: Matrix of Promising Practices for Identifying the Disadvantaged Gifted and Talented*

Groups Disadvantaged in Identification:

ENVIRONMENTALLY DISADVANTAGED

The Poor
Minority Race/Culture
Rural/Urban
English as Second Language
Females (in specific categories)

DISADVANTAGED BY KIND OF GIFTEDNESS:

Creative
Exceptional Intellect
Visual/Performing Arts
Psychosocial/Leadership
Psychosocial/Human Relations
Psychomotor

OTHER DISADVANTAGES:

Underachievement
Physical Disabilities
Learning Disabilities
Emotional Disabilities

PROMISING PRACTICES	Inventories/Checklists	Information from Students	Interviews	Biographical Data/Case Studies	Performance Evaluation	Product Evaluation	Norming for Subpopulations	Culture Fair Tests	Language-specific Tests	I.Q. Tests	Instrumental Enrichment	Developmental Curriculum
The Poor	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Minority Race/Culture	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rural/Urban	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
English as Second Language	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Females (in specific categories)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Creative	•	•	•	•	•	•						•
Exceptional Intellect	•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•
Visual/Performing Arts	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	•
Psychosocial/Leadership	•	•	•	•	•						•	•
Psychosocial/Human Relations	•	•	•	•	•						•	•
Psychomotor	•	•	•	•	•						•	•
Underachievement	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•
Physical Disabilities	•	•	•	•						•	•	•
Learning Disabilities	•	•	•	•						•	•	•
Emotional Disabilities	•	•	•	•						•	•	•

* Reprinted with permission from E. Susanne Richert, *Identification of Gifted Students: An Update*, 1985.

VI. Recommendations for Increasing Participation of Minority and Culturally Diverse Students in Gifted Programs

Analysis of the literature in the field of gifted education suggests numerous recommendations for increasing participation of minority students in gifted programs.

A. Administrators are urged to:

- Utilize Chart V (What are the Criteria for Excellence in a Gifted Program?) to review their program for gifted students;
- Establish an inclusive definition of giftedness so that appropriate identification procedures can be established;
- Develop steps for establishing and implementing multifaceted identification procedures which include planning, organizing, setting priorities as well as nomination and identification procedures;
- Become familiar with the identification and selection procedures and the educational programs for the gifted that have proportional minority and gender representation;
- Ensure that multiple identification procedures, including informal and formal instruments, are used at various stages of identification to avoid bias;
- Keep statistics on the representation of minority students for each area of the working definition in order to monitor the program and assure adequate representation of minority students in all areas, especially among the intellectually gifted;
- Provide teachers with information about minority underrepresentation in gifted programs and with tools that will help them to increase minority representation, e.g., information on multiple identification procedures and non-biased or less biased tests;
- Encourage and develop parental and community support services to interact freely with the school to address their needs and any concerns about student participation;
- Provide inservice training for school personnel to encourage active involvement of teachers and school counselors in the early identification of potential candidates for gifted programs;
- Train gifted program teachers to recognize potential in minority, culturally diverse students, and students with disabilities.

B. Teachers are urged to:

- Make an effort to recognize culture-specific as well as general aspects of giftedness;
- Use small group activities and other means to promote self-acceptance, mutual acceptance, and interpersonal and intercultural understanding among all students;
- Help culturally and linguistically different students develop a strong sense of identity through the use of history, current events, biographies and other curricular and extracurricular activities relating to various ethnic groups and cultures;
- Identify and/or prepare activities which help the minority child achieve success;
- Utilize a developmental curriculum which creates an environment to evoke the exceptional potential of gifted students who are underachieving or members of groups which are disadvantaged by the identification procedures;
- Assist students to overcome barriers such as test anxiety and to learn strategies for test sophistication;
- Focus on specific strategies for developing creative thinking skills and problem solving abilities in all major content areas;
- Design programming compatible with students' strengths, characteristics, and learning and living styles;
- Communicate high expectations to all students;
- Utilize varied instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, peer coaching or mentoring, and mastery learning.

Chart V. What Are the Criteria for Excellence in a Gifted Program?*

I. Identification Procedures:

Look for Comprehensiveness and Equity

Yes No Why is this important?

A. Nomination for a Talent Pool

1. Students are sought in *all areas* of giftedness in the Federal definition: a. general intellectual; b. academic; c. creative; d. visual and performing arts; e. psychosocial and f. psychomotor.
2. The Talent Pool is representative of the entire student population.
3. Tests are used to include, not exclude students from programs.
4. Information *beyond* tests is used.
5. Teachers have training in the characteristics of giftedness among diverse students.

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A.

- 1-2. Comprehensive identification benefits all those students included because it provides a broader experience of giftedness. The more students identified (up to 25%), greater variety in possible grouping by interests becomes possible.
3. Disadvantaged students are not excluded from programs solely on the basis of test scores that are biased against them. Gifted students should be able to know gifted people from a variety of backgrounds.
4. Creative and disadvantaged students are served.
5. Teacher bias in identification is avoided.

B. Assessment: Matching Needs and Program Options

1. Further information on interests and learning styles is sought.
2. Data is gathered to match student needs and multiple program options.

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B.

1. Data is gathered for curriculum purposes.
2. All students are not funneled into a single program option.

C. Evaluation: Improve the Program

1. Data is gathered on individual student progress rather than just competitive evaluation.
2. Students are involved in self-evaluation.

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C.

1. The purpose of evaluation is *not* to exclude students but to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.
2. Students have choices in placements or changes.

II. Program Design:

How many of these *different* program options are available to identified gifted students?

1. The regular classroom provides alternatives to students as part of the regular curriculum.
2. Varied homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings as appropriate in required or elective subjects.
3. Resource rooms or learning centers in a pull-out option.
4. Access to libraries/laboratories at a higher level building.
5. Continuous progress in the basic skills.
6. Early entrance to or exit from school, or grade skipping.

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Why is this important?

- 1-12. Gifted children are as different from each other as they are from other children. They have needs for differing amounts of homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, and at various stages of development their interests differ. *No single program option can ever meet all of the needs of all gifted children.*

* Adapted from E. Susanne Richert, *What are the Criteria for Excellence in a Gifted Program?*, 1984. Reprinted with permission.

II. Program Design (continued)

	Yes	No
7. Mini-courses, seminars	_____	_____
8. Extracurricular activities focus on student interests after school, Saturday or in the summer.	_____	_____
9. Independent study is a possibility.	_____	_____
10. Internships/mentorships	_____	_____
11. Field trips	_____	_____
12. Counselors have special training dealing with gifted students.	_____	_____

III. Staff Training is essential. Do staff in all program options including the regular class, have some training in each of these areas of gifted education?

1. Identification	_____	_____
2. Academic needs	_____	_____
3. Emotional needs	_____	_____
4. Non-competitive evaluation procedures	_____	_____

5. Evoking full potential from both sides of the brain	_____	_____
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IV. Curriculum: What should it provide?

Does the curriculum in each program option, including the regular class, meet more than half of these objectives?:

1. Grouping At least part of the time, do gifted students have time to work together in groups of 2-18?	_____	_____
2. Content or Subject At least part of the time is the content modified in one of these 3 ways? a. Accelerated - moving more quickly b. Interdisciplinary c. Based on individual or group interests	_____	_____
3. Is the emphasis on higher level thinking rather than just more information?	_____	_____

Why?

- 1-4. *Every educator is an educator of the gifted.* Educators are involved in identifying, teaching, relating to, and evaluating gifted children. They need to learn how to do this appropriately so both they and their students are successful. Students should never be victimized by conflicting expectations in the different parts of their academic program, including the regular classroom.
5. The curriculum should avoid "half-brained" education.

Why is this important?

1. Homogeneous grouping is essential for some of the time to share common interests, stimulate each others' thinking and to learn that others can be better than they are at some things.
2. a. Students' time should not be wasted.
b. Students need to learn to relate information across disciplines.
c. Interests are essential to galvanize students' gifted abilities.
3. The ability for higher level thinking, both critical and creative, is one of the essential characteristics of the gifted that must be developed if their full potential is to be achieved.

IV. Curriculum (continued)

	Yes	No	Why is this important?
4. Are children encouraged to apply their learning to create variety of products rather than just be tested?	_____	_____	4. The gifted are producers, not just consumers of knowledge.
5. Do students have access to higher level resources?			5. Gifted children should be able to get the most complex information they can handle.
a. Libraries or labs in upper level schools	_____	_____	
b. Adults or older gifted children as experts	_____	_____	
6. Does the curriculum foster emotional growth by developing:			6. We do a disservice to gifted children we identify if we don't help with their emotional needs. The label of gifted can be a burden, unless we assist them to deal with the inevitable pressures placed on exceptional children that make them vulnerable to underachievement, self-alienation and suicide.
a. Positive self-concepts, self-acceptance	_____	_____	
b. Independence	_____	_____	
c. Risk-taking in creative activities or projects	_____	_____	
d. Self-evaluation skills	_____	_____	
e. Integrating personal growth into the content of the curriculum.	_____	_____	
7. Does the curriculum develop decision-making skills:			7. Independent thought and action is a requisite for full development of gifted potential. Students learn responsibility and decision-making by being fully informed of why they are asked to do various assignments and by being offered choices.
a. As part of the content of the curriculum	_____	_____	
b. In offering students a variety of options at each stage	_____	_____	
c. By guaranteeing that students learn the objectives of every class and activity.	_____	_____	
8. Does Evaluation focus on:			8. The highest level of critical thinking is evaluation. Advanced emotional development requires self-esteem to be independent of external sources. Internal sources for self-esteem need to be developed as early as possible.
a. Individual progress rather than just comparisons or competition	_____	_____	
b. Evaluation criteria that include originality rather than just conformity or perfection in details	_____	_____	
c. Involving students in self-evaluation.	_____	_____	
9. Does the curriculum stimulate both sides of the brain?			9. Brain research emphasizes the necessity to evoke the intellectual potential of both sides of the brain. Gifted curriculum should overcome a left-brain hemisphere bias in our culture so the whole potential of all gifted children will be developed. We need to avoid half-brained education for the gifted.
a. Does the curriculum develop spatial and visual abilities as well as verbal abilities and calculation?	_____	_____	
b. Are intuition, feeling and imagination as valued as logic, scientific data and accuracy?	_____	_____	
c. Are students given options of working on two and three dimensional creative projects as well as on verbal or quantitative reports?	_____	_____	

VII.

Conclusion

The underrepresentation in gifted programs of students who are members of minority or other groups which are disadvantaged by existing identification procedures warrants increased attention from educators. This report documents some of the key research findings and expert opinions of those who are providing leadership in the efforts to increase minority participation in gifted and talented programs in the public schools of the United States.

The continuing efforts of committed educators in collaboration with parents and the community, will bring about change. These efforts will ensure that all children will, at last, have an equal opportunity to maximize their potential.

"... If we are to achieve a richer culture we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place."

Margaret Mead

Appendix A.

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Appendix B.

Matrix of Selected Readings

The following matrix has three purposes:

- to offer a resource to those who wish to review the literature on identification of gifted disadvantaged students (each citation is annotated in the matrix according to the identification topic);
- to document the research in key literature since 1970 on which this monograph is based; and
- to list sources of sample forms which may be used for informal identification procedures.

	Definition	General Identification	Intellectual/Academic	Creativity	Visual/ Performing Arts	Leadership	Sample forms, e.g. checklists, observation and nomination forms
Alvino, J.J., McDonnell, R.C. & Richert, E.S. National Survey of Identification Practices in Gifted and Talented Education. <i>Exceptional Children</i> , 1981, 48(2), 124-131.			•	•	•		
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	Definition	General Identification	Intellectual/Academic	Creativity	Visual/ Performing Arts	Leadership	Sample forms, e.g. checklists, observation and nomination forms
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	Definition	General Identification	Intellectual/Academic	Creativity	Visual/ Performing Arts	Leadership	Sample forms, e.g. checklists, observation and nomination forms
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	Definition	General Identification	Intellectual/Academic	Creativity	Visual/ Performing Arts	Leadership	Sample forms, e.g. checklists, observation and nomination forms
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Appendix C.

Professional Training Programs In Gifted Education

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education has identified the following professional training programs for Gifted Education in the mid-Atlantic region, (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia):

Anderson-Broadus College
Department of Education
Box 425A
Philippi, WV 26416
(304) 457-1700

Fairmont State College
Department of Education
Locust Avenue
Fairmont, WV 26554
(304) 367-4130

Johns Hopkins University
Department of Education
School of Continuing Studies
34th and Charles Streets
Baltimore, MD 21218
(301) 338-8273

Marshall University
Special Education Program
Huntington, WV 25701
(304) 696-2340

Norfolk State University
Department of Education
2401 Corprew Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23504
(804) 683-8714

University of Pittsburgh
Department of Special Education
5M25 Forbes Quadrangle
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
(412) 624-1411

University of Richmond
Department of Education
Richmond, VA 23173
(804) 289-8427

West Virginia College of Graduate Studies
Department of Special Education
Institute, WV 25112
(304) 768-9711

West Virginia University
Department of Special Education
504 Allen Hall
Morgantown, WV 26506
(304) 293-4142/3450

Information about other states or other Special Education programs may be obtained from:

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
Careers Center/The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091
(703) 620-3660



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